



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

United States Patent and Trademark Office

Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS

P.O. Box 1450

Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450

www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/687,445	10/13/2000	Charles Lee Asplin	20158.2US01	1343
52835 7590 07/29/2008 HAMRE, SCHUMANN, MUELLER & LARSON, P.C. P.O. BOX 2902 MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55402-0902				
EXAMINER				
ADDIE, RAYMOND W				
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
3671				
MAIL DATE		DELIVERY MODE		
07/29/2008		PAPER		

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/687,445

Applicant(s)

ASPLIN, CHARLES LEE

Examiner

Raymond W. Addie

Art Unit

3671

Period for Reply -- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 24 March 2008.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 12-29 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 12-29 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 10/13/2000 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SF/IC)
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____
- Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 12, 17, 25-29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over
Flock # 1,943,914 in view of Asplin # 5,860,763.

Flock discloses a method of lifting and leveling a slab of concrete (6) using compressed air to compact the sunken soil (5) below the slab (6), and to lift the slab, to stabilize and hold said slab in a desired position, the method comprising the steps of:

Drilling a hole in said slab (6).

Attaching said gun nozzle (13) to said slab (6), and at least partially within said drilled
Hole, via guide sleeve (18).

Supplying an aggregate storage tank (not shown) filled with an aggregate, such as earth
clay etc., said storage tank being connected to an injector gun (19) via an
elongate fluid tight hose (9). See Col. 2.

Supplying a compressed air source in fluid tight connection with said aggregate storage
tank such that an aggregate is discharged under pressure to compact the subsoil
and raise the sunken pavement (6). See Col. 3, Ins. 88-110.

Mixing the aggregate and compressed air in order to;

Deliver said compressed sand/air mixture to said injector gun (19) and through a nozzle (13); and into a cavity created below the sunken slab (6). See Col. 3, Ins. 19-44. Lifting said slab (6), momentarily, with said compressed air; to height at least equal to a desired final level with the inherent internal pressure of said compressed air such that a settle cavity is formed, and back pressure is applied to the bottom surface of said slab (6) to raise said slab.

Leveling said ground with said aggregate by said compressed air, such that said aggregate may move about said settle cavity and fill said cavity, thus supporting the bottom surface of said slab (6).

Repeating said lifting and leveling steps until said slab is at said desired level and resting upon said aggregate, thus injected.

What Flock does not disclose is the specific use of well dried mason's sand. However, Asplin teaches well dried mason's sand is advantageously used to fill a cavity below sunken pavement slabs (52), by compressed air injection, utilizing an injector gun (42). See Col. 4.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time the invention was made to provide the method of raising sunken pavement, of Flock, with the step of utilizing mason's sand to fill a cavity formed below sunken pavement, as taught by Asplin, in order to form a compressed foundation layer of aggregate, to support said slab in a raised, level position.

3. Claims 13-16, 18-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Flock '914 in view of Asplin '763 as applied to claims 12, 17 above, and further in view of Lightle # 5,795,108.

Flock in view of Asplin disclose essentially all that is claimed, to include the use of a hopper (32) and various valve assemblies (34, 30, 32, 56) to control movement and placement of the pressurized aggregate, such as dirt, or sand.

Flock further discloses the steps of drilling a plurality of holes (11) and filling each hole with pressurized aggregate until the pavement is leveled and then patching the hole (11) with cement or the like. See cols. 3-4.

Flock also discloses the injector gun can be any of several different embodiments having different shapes, sizes and nozzle openings can be disposed in various orientations, relative to the supply hose (9).

What Flock in view of Asplin do not disclose are the various structural features of the pressurized delivery system. However, Lightle teaches the steps of:

Providing a high-volume, compressed air source and plurality of valve assemblies (30, 32, 56) for controlling the flow of sand through the distribution systems. Said valve assemblies increasing the safety of pressurized system, and providing sufficient pressure for placing aggregate in a desired location, through an aggregate distribution system. See Lightle Cols. 2-3.

Conclusion

4. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Raymond W. Addie whose telephone number is 571 272-6986. The examiner can normally be reached on 7am-3:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Thomas B. Will can be reached on 571 272-6998. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Raymond W. Addie/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3671

7/21/2008